

REMARKS

New claims 17-23 are broader in some respects than the other claims in the application in that most of them do not specify that the panels extend horizontally. Claims 17-23 are specific to the construction of the joint between adjacent panels and their allowability is not dependent on the panels extending in any particular direction and/or on the panels being substantially flat.

The following is a reproduction of Fig. 5:



Claim 17 specifies an elongated, first wall panel having a first panel edge, inside and outside side skins, and spaced apart internal webs interconnecting the side skins.

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In Fig. 5, a first wall panel is shown on the top of the view. It has side skins 24, 26. In this particular example, skin 24 is an outside skin and skin 26 is an inside skin. This panel has a first panel edge 22. It also has spaced apart internal webs 28 that are shown in Fig. 1. In Fig. 5, a second wall panel is shown at the bottom of the view. It has side skins 48, 50. In this example, side skin 48 is on the outside and side skin 50 is on the inside. The second wall panel includes a second panel edge 44.

In the example shown by Fig. 5, the first panel edge includes a longitudinal groove 84 and the second panel edge includes a longitudinal tongue 86. As shown by Fig. 5, the tongue 86 fits into the groove 84.

The first wall panel also includes corner regions 88, 88 that extend between the side skins 22, 24 and the first panel edge 22. The second panel includes corner regions 90, 90 extending between the side skins 48, 50 and the second panel edge 44. The corner regions together form longitudinally extending weld recesses where the corner regions 88, 88 of the first wall panel adjoin the corner regions 90, 90 of the second wall panel, when the panel edges 22, 44 are together.

The panels 10, 12 are spaced from each other such as shown in Fig. 4. Then, the panel edges 22, 24 are moved together to cause tongue 86 to enter into groove 84. Movement is continued until end edge 22 contacts end edge 44, as shown in Fig. 5. Weld beads 82 are applied in the recesses to firmly connect the two panels 10, 12 together. When the panels 10, 12 are together, the corner regions 88, 90 and the welds 82 form wide and thick portions at the outer portions of the panel edges 22, 44. The panel edges 22, 44 provide a double thickness where they extend between the portions formed by the corner regions 88, 90 and the

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welds 82. As shown by Fig. 5, the connection between the two panels 10, 12 has a generally I-beam cross section. This generally I-beam portion of the wall extends the full length of the joint between the wall panels 10, 12.

On page 12 of the specification there is a description of a floor structure made by joining together a plurality of panels or extrusions. In claims 17-23 the use of the term "wall panel" includes panels used in forming sidewalls, end walls or bottom walls. A floor structure is a wall; it is a bottom wall.

It is submitted that claims 17-23 are all allowable. Accordingly, early consideration and allowance of this application are requested.

Respectfully submitted:

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